

Rams raided by Ashford's youngsters

Contributed by Mick Snowden
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Beaconsfield SYCOB 1 Ashford Town (Middlesex) 2 Under-18 Pre-Season Match,
Beaconsfield Academy

7th August 2008 This was the third game of the week and almost a game too far for a young Ashford Youth Squad. Although they secured their fifth win in five friendlies a number of the players were very tired at the final whistle. The game started poorly for Ashford as within the first minute Bona who is a very solid defender and a very solid character took a very poor throw in. He attempted to find one of his own players from a very deep position near the corner flag. Unfortunately his teammate was inside the penalty area and an alert Beaconsfield forward read the throw and intercepted the ball controlled it and finished past a very surprised Dane Buss in the Ashford goal. As often happens in these situations it took Ashford sometime to recover their composure and confidence. This was made harder by the fact that this was the most inexperienced side Mick Snowden had picked for the matches to date. However Ashford gradually got a foothold in the game and started to create a number of chances. They were reasonably secure defensively although not as strong as in recent games. Ashford equalised after about 35 minutes. George Jennings very cleverly and with good use of his body turned a very tight marking defender on the edge of the penalty area. The ball sat up nicely for him and he finished with a sweet strike past the goalkeeper. The game was very even throughout the rest of the half. Shortly after half time Ashford made a number of substitutions Streeter and Houlihan came on for Casteldine and Bona in defence and Gough and Bitmead came on for Verdun and Zamit in midfield. Ashford gradually took a stranglehold on the game and were looking the stronger of the two teams. One attack resulted in an excellent control and strike by Betts that was cleared off the line by a defender the following strike by an Ashford player was again cleared off the line by the same defender. Ashford eventually went in front in the 78th minute. A long clearance by Buss beat both Jennings and his marker. Loates playing left midfield read the flight of the ball and attacked the space behind Jennings. He controlled the ball and cut into the box unopposed before finishing with a fine left foot shot across the goalkeeper. Apart from one defensive mix up between Butler and Houlihan Beaconsfield were not allowed any further opportunities to equalise and Ashford duly won the game 2 - 1.